

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A point service utilizing system comprising:
 - a point managing section for managing the cumulative number of points owned by each user;
 - a point reader that when a user is specified, is adapted to read said cumulative number of points corresponding to the specified user;
 - a facility search section for searching for an available facility based on said cumulative number of points read by said point reader; and
 - a search result displaying section for displaying the facility identified by the search of said facility search section.
2. The point service utilizing system according to claim 1, wherein said search result displaying section is adapted to display detailed information about said facility when a predetermined operation is executed by a user.
3. The point service utilizing system according to claim 2, wherein said detailed information about the displayed facility includes the contents of a point service to be offered by said facility.
4. The point service utilizing system according to claim 2, wherein said detailed information about the displayed facility includes the contents of the point service which is available to the user within a range of said cumulative number of points owned by said user.
5. The point service utilizing system according to claim 1, further comprising:
 - a destination setting section for selecting and setting a destination for route search processing from among a plurality of the facilities displayed by said search result displaying section; and

a route search section for searching for a guidance route for a vehicle to the destination set by said destination setting section.

6. The point service utilizing system according to claim 5, further comprising a route guidance section for guiding the vehicle along the guidance route searched for by said route search section.

7. The point service utilizing system according to claim 1, further comprising a driving state detector for detecting a driving state of a vehicle of the user,

wherein said point managing section carries out addition processing of points corresponding to the vehicle driving state detected by said driving state detector to said cumulative number of points.

8. The point service utilizing system according to claim 7, wherein said driving state detector detects the driving state of the vehicle of interest in relation to another vehicle associated with the traveling of the vehicle of interest.

9. The point service utilizing system according to claim 8, wherein, if a driver of said vehicle of interest gives way to a driver of said other vehicle when said other vehicle is about to enter a road or lane where said vehicle of interest is traveling, said point managing section carries out addition processing of points to said cumulative number of points.

10. The point service utilizing system according to claim 8, wherein, if the driver of said vehicle of interest gives a higher priority to the traveling movement of said other vehicle when a future traveling movement of said vehicle of interest is identical to that of said other vehicle, said point managing section carries out addition processing of points to said cumulative number of points.

11. A method of utilizing a point service, comprising:
when a user is specified, obtaining the cumulative number of points corresponding to the specified user;

searching for an available facility based on said cumulative number of points; and

displaying the facility identified by the search.

12. The method of utilizing a point service according to claim 11, further comprising displaying detailed information on said facility identified by the search when a predetermined operation is executed by a user.

13. The method of utilizing a point service according to claim 12, wherein said detailed information on the facility includes the contents of the point service to be offered by said facility.

14. The method of utilizing a point service according to claim 11, further comprising:

selecting and setting a destination for route search processing from among a plurality of the facilities identified by the search; and
searching for a guidance route for the vehicle to said destination.

15. The method of utilizing a point service according to claim 14, further comprising guiding a vehicle along the guidance route.

16. A vehicle navigation apparatus comprising:

a point reader that when a user is specified, is adapted to read the cumulative number of points corresponding to the specified user from an external point managing section for managing the cumulative number of points owned by each user;

a facility search section for searching for an available facility based on said cumulative number of points read by said point reader; and

a search result displaying section for displaying the facility identified by the search of said facility search section.

17. The vehicle navigation apparatus according to claim 16, further comprising:

a destination setting section for selecting and setting a destination for route search processing from among a plurality of facilities displayed by said search result displaying section; and

a route search section for searching for a guidance route for the vehicle to the destination set by said destination setting section.

18. The vehicle navigation apparatus according to claim 16, wherein said search result displaying section is adapted to display detailed information on said facility when a predetermined operation is executed by a user.

19. The vehicle navigation apparatus according to claim 18, wherein said detailed information on the displayed facility includes the contents of a point service to be offered by said facility.

20. The vehicle navigation apparatus according to claim 18, wherein said detailed information on the displayed facility includes the contents of the point service which is available to the user within a range of said cumulative number of points owned by said user.